

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 06516 191437Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3220

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NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY, SAUNDERS, AND GELB FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PCAT, IS, SA
SUBJECT: ISRAELI REQUEST FOR US ASSURANCES CONCERNING SALES OF
F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. WHEN I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN ON ANOTHER
SUBJECT MAY 19, HE SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER BEGIN HAD
ASKED ME TO SEEK CLARIFICATION CONCERNING CERTAIN
ASPECTS OF THE SALE OF F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA.

2. THE GOI WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THE US CAN
GIVE IT ASSURANCES ON THREE KEY QUESTIONS WITH RESPECT
TO THE EVENTUAL DELIVERY OF F-15'S TO THE SAUDIS. HE
STRESSED THAT DESPITE WHAT SECRETARY BROWN HAD SAID TO
THE CONGRESS ABOUT SAUDI ASSURANCES, PUBLIC STATEMENTS
BY SAUDI LEADERS TO THE EFFECT THAT SAUDI ARABIA ACCEPTED
NO LIMITATIONS ON ITS EVENTUAL USE OF THESE AIRCRAFT
WERE EXTREMELY TROUBLING. IF POSSIBLE, THE ISRAELIS
WOULD LIKE "FORMAL ASSURANCES" FROM THE UNITED STATES THAT:
A. THE PLANES WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE TRANSFERRED TO ANY
OTHER COUNTRY. (DAYAN SAID THE GOI ASSUMES THAT US
COULD ASSURE THAT THIS NOT TAKE PLACE THROUGH ITS CONTROL
OVER SPARE PARTS, AND SO FORTH.)

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B. THAT THE PLANES WILL NOT RPT NOT BE STATIONED AT
TABUK.
C. THAT THE PLANES WILL NOT RPT NOT BE USED IN ANY
CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL.

3. I RESPONDED THAT I WOULD IMMEDIATELY CONVEY THIS
REQUEST TO WASHINGTON AND ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN AN ANSWER

AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, ALTHOUGH I DOUBTED ANYTHING DEFINITIVE COULD BE SAID BEFORE THE CABINET MEETING THIS SUNDAY. DAYAN CONFIRMED THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL FOR THAT CABINET MEETING TO HAVE AT LEAST SOME PRELIMINARY RESPONSE.

4. I ALSO POINTED OUT THAT QUESTION C WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RAISE THE ISSUE OF SAUDI RIGHT AND INDEED OBLIGATION TO USE THE AIRCRAFT IN SELF-DEFENSE, EVEN AGAINST ISRAEL SHOULD ISRAEL ATTACK SAUDI ARABIA IN SOME FUTURE CONFLICT. DAYAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT OBVIOUSLY THE SAUDIS COULD AND SHOULD INSIST ON THE RIGHT TO USE THE PLANES IN SELF DEFENSE AGAINST ISRAEL IF ISRAEL ATTACKED SAUDI ARABIA. BUT, HE SAID, WE WOULD LIKE ASSURANCES FROM THE US THAT THE SAUDIS WILL NOT USE THESE PLANES IN A CONFLICT IN WHICH WAR BREAKS OUT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND OTHER ARAB STATES AND SAUDI ARABIA THEN CLAIMS TO BE ACTING IN SELF DEFENSE "OF THE ARAB CAUSE" IN JOINING IN TO ASSIST ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS.

5. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD THE QUESTION BEING ASKED, THAT I COULD NOT PROMISE WHAT KIND OF ASSURANCES MIGHT BE GIVEN BY THE US, IF ANY, BUT THAT I WOULD IMMEDIATELY PUT THE QUESTION TO WASHINGTON.

6. WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE SOME PRELIMINARY REACTION
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NO LATER THAN 12 NOON WASHINGTON TIME, SATURDAY, MAY 20, WHICH I COULD CONVEY TO DAYAN BEFORE THE CABINET MEETING. ANYTHING POSITIVE WE CAN OFFER CAN HELP TO RESTRAIN THE DEBATE ON THE ARMS SALE IN THE CABINET SUNDAY MORNING AND TO FACILITATE OUR GETTING TEMPERS AND TEMPERATURES HERE BACK SOMEWHERE BELOW THE BOILING POINT.
LEWIS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, FOREIGN COMMITMENTS, POPULAR SUPPORT, MILITARY SALES, F-15, CAT-B
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Draft Date: 19 may 1978
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